coming his way, which he refuses to accept. Gostrey hints that she is willing to marry him, but Strether is resolved not to get "anything out of the whole affair". Mme. de Vionnet unknowingly hits on the truth when she remarks that for one to be happy one has to take "so much out of the lives of others". To Strether, happiness lies not so much in taking as in giving. An achieved refinement of conscious-ness enables him to transcend the self by releasing its inexhaustible freedom for the benefit of others, and by placing others in the fertiliz-ing possibilities of life.

Refinement in Strether is dramatically identified with that pro-cess of conscious self-culture, which reverses the. life-denying rebuttals of value by a conventional, stereotyped material civilisation, Strether does not refine life, but rather refines his own selfhood in ocder that the self is once more placed in the normalcy of all life. Thus he sheds his Thespian mask of a Saviour, and becomes a "seer," whereby, he becomes a Saviour unto himself rather than to others. The self which starts out to redeem others, by the dramatic return to the normal, becomes redeemed by "others".

^ - In Strether's character, James has not only dramatised in terms of spiritual refinement the Emersonian assertion of the infinitude of the private person, but also demonstrates his perfection in a field of consciousness made vitally accessible to public influences. Henry James transcends the transcendentalist view of the self by completing fhe process of refinement in the individual, who returns to the happy sanity of life after quietly achieving an apotheosis of himself. At the end of the novel Strether is verily the ertsainted individual restored to the serene currents of time, life and vision.

Refinement, according to Henry James, is not idealism, because it weds the two orders of life, the ideal and the real; it designates a condition and a state of life in which the ideal and the real combine fn"mutually fructifying patterns. Pure ideality can corrupt, ev*en as

absolute - evil ~ can contaminate life'. Refinement, as James sees it, is a state of ^rtimated consciousness in which no truth of life suffer^ loss or deprivation.

The Wings of the Dove extends the theme of 'conversion and refinement revealed in *The Ambassadors,* and enacts its moral and Spiritual-" rmpTrcations *fn the developing consciousness "of the young